

Transition to Adult Living
Implementation Team Meeting
December 4, 2003

Present:

Robin Arnold-Williams, Department of Human Services
Richard Anderson, Division of Child and Family Services
Mike Richardson, Department of Workforce Services
James Anderson, Christmas Box House
Jane Broadhead, Department of Workforce Services
Marie Christman, Department of Human Services
Vicki Cottrell, NAMI Utah
Daniel Dayton, Step Beyond Inc.
George Delavan, Department of Health
Richard Dimick, Progressive Youth
Barbara Feaster, U Foster Success
Cindy Gates, Foster Parent Association
Steve Goodrich, UPS, Community Relations Manager
Ron Harrell, Division of Youth Corrections
Stephen Jardine, Governor's Ofc of Planning and Budget
Tiffany Martin, Youth
Lisa McDonald, Utah Foster Foundation
Amanda Singer, Department of Human Services
Barbara Thompson, Department of Human Services
Richard E. Walker, Dept. Community and Economic Dev.

Excused:

Karl Wilson, Office of Education

Guests:

Jennifer Calcut, Division of Child and Family Services
LeRoy Franke, Concerned Citizen
Natalie Harmon, Governor's Commission on Marriage
Suzette Martellaro, Department of Workforce Services
Melanie Reese, Governor's Commission on Marriage

Welcome/ Introductions

Robin Arnold-Williams indicated that the Transition to Adult Living is a key initiative of Governor Walker's administration. The Implementation Team has a unique opportunity in the next 14 months to make significant improvements to the system of services for youth transitioning to adulthood.

Richard Anderson showed video clips of the Governor's Press Conference then told the team that the DCFS Five Year Transition to Adult Living Plan is the foundation for what will be accomplished in the next 14 months. He asked the Team to look at the plan and decide what could be accomplished over the next

year. He thanked all the individuals for the tremendous job they did producing the plan. Given the tasks the Governor wants to accomplish in the next 14 months, the Team must operate at lightning speed and not just plan but also do.

Richard Anderson thanked Tiffany Martin for coming and representing foster youth. He asked for her input and for the input of youth groups to help direct this initiative.

Implementation Team Tasks:

Richard Anderson reviewed the following tasks identified by Governor Walker:

Website

A website will be developed that provides access to resources for youth transitioning out of foster care. The website will have a different feel than the usual state website. It will be designed to meet the interests of youth aged 16-21.

Mike Richardson mentioned that DWS has staff that could help with the development of the website.

Jim Anderson mentioned the need for a single place for youth to access information, services and supports.

Richard Anderson hoped that the website will have 24/7 capacity to help youth and respond to their questions.

Transitional Fund

Robin Arnold-Williams mentioned that one of the first pieces of welfare reform was to establish a flexible pool of funds to meet the needs of individuals transitioning from welfare to jobs.

Richard Anderson mentioned that DCFS has initiated “creative interventions” that encourages staff to look at funding in a flexible and creative way to meet the needs of clients.

Mentoring

Richard Anderson told the Team that mentoring should be a community effort not just government. People who have never been involved in child welfare can be encouraged to become involved. Corporations could invest in youth.

Lisa McDonald mentioned that Home Depot has developed soft wear to track youth.

Life Skills

Richard Anderson indicated that life skills classes are already offered to foster youth, but youth have mentioned that they want more than just classes they want hand-on experiences.

Robin Arnold-Williams introduced Melanie Reese and Natalie Harmon from the Governor's Commission on Marriage. Jackie Leavitt, the chair of the Governor's Commission on Marriage, wants high schools to require students to take the adult roles and responsibility class. Financial literacy is an emphasis. This class is another opportunity for youth to practice life skills.

Transportation

Richard Anderson said that youth in foster care cannot obtain car insurance or a driver's license. They are frustrated that they are encouraged to be independent but do not have the transportation to make it happen.

Cindy Gates mentioned that Job Corp has been very successful for several foster youth and that Job Corps has figured out how to obtain a driver's licenses.

National Governor's Association Policy Academy:

Amanda Singer told the Team that the National Governor's Association has selected Utah to participate in a Policy Academy on improving outcomes for low income families and children. The policy academy is designed to bring national experts together with state level executive leadership staff to help develop new policies and practices to streamline, collaborate and integrate service delivery. The development of a network of services for youth transitioning to adulthood is the topic that Utah has chosen to address at the Policy Academy.

Next Meeting:

The Implementation Team agreed to meet on a monthly basis. The task groups and the entire team will meet on the same day and additional task group meetings can be scheduled as the members see fit. The Implementation Team meetings will be on the first Wednesday of every month at 1:30. The next meeting will be **Wednesday, January 7, 2004 at 1:30 p.m. at the Department of Human Services.**